PAUL URGES RESTRICTIONS ON STUDENT VISAS IN HOMELAND DEFENSE BILL

 Washington, DC- Congressman Ron Paul wants Congress to deny student visas to individuals from countries that sponsor terrorism, and he favors similar restrictions on diversity visa programs for the same countries. The current list of terror-sponsoring states includes Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria. Paul will work to incorporate these needed changes in our visa rules when Congress considers a homeland security bill this summer.

"Common sense dictates that we should not be handing out new visas to residents of countries that don't cooperate with our State department in fighting terrorism," Paul stated. "Most of the criminals who carried out the September 11 attacks entered the country using student visas, so we hardly should continue to open our doors to students from places like Iraq. If we are serious about conducting a war on terrorism, we cannot simultaneously give aid and comfort to our enemies, including the aid and comfort of living in the United States."

Paul sits on the House International Relations committee, which has jurisdiction over new visa rules in the Homeland Security Act. Paul want to ensure that any homeland security legislation focuses on terrorists and possible terrorists themselves, rather than innocent American citizens.

"We need to draw a bright line between American citizens and noncitizen residents or visitors," Paul continued. "We don't need to sacrifice civil liberties to strengthen our defenses against terrorism. First and foremost, we must take control of our borders and prevent potential terrorists from entering the country. We also must do a better job of keeping track of those individuals we do allow to enter. Visas should not serve as a revolving door that allows our worst enemies to live among us."